

OCT 10 2006

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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicants: Minoru YOSHIDA et al.
Serial No.: 10/765,920
Filed: January 29, 2004
Title: PATTERN DEFECT INSPECTION METHOD AND ITS APPARATUS
Group: 2878
Examiner: ZETTL, Mary E.
Confirmation No.: 2671

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT FILED WITH REQUEST FOR CONTINUED EXAMINATION (RCE)

Mail Stop: AMENDMENT
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450

October 10, 2006

Sir:

In response to the Office Action dated April 10, 2006, please amend the above-identified application as listed below and as set forth on the following pages:

Amendments to the claims begin on page 2;

Remarks are included beginning on page 13; and

Authorization is included on page 19.